

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend claims 1, 14 and 19 as follows:

1. (currently amended) An apparatus for aiding steering when a vehicle is being driven in reverse while a driver operates a steering wheel, the moving direction of the vehicle being determined in response to the angle of steered wheels, the apparatus comprising:

a camera for capturing an image of an area behind the vehicle;

a monitor for displaying the image captured by the camera;

a detector for detecting the angle of the steered wheels; and

a display control unit for displaying a guide marking for aiding steering, the marking and the image being simultaneously displayed on the monitor when the vehicle is being driven in reverse, wherein the marking provides the driver with at least first and second indications, wherein the first indication is a fixed reference guide displaying vehicle width projecting behind the vehicle and continuously showing a path of the vehicle corresponding to the angle of zero degrees of the steered wheels regardless of the current angle of the steered wheels, and wherein the second indication is simultaneously displayed with the first indication and shows a prospective path of the vehicle corresponding to the current angle of the steered wheels detected by the detector.

2. (previously presented) The apparatus as recited in claim 1, wherein the display control unit calculates the prospective path assuming that the vehicle is moved in reverse, on the basis of information from the detector, and wherein the second indication of the marking represents the width of the vehicle and extends behind the rear end of the vehicle by a predetermined distance along the prospective path.

3. (previously presented) The apparatus as recited in claim 2, wherein the second indication of the marking includes a pair of side marks that extends behind the rear end of the vehicle along the prospective path and are spaced apart from each other by the width of the vehicle.

4. (previously presented) The apparatus as recited in claim 2, wherein the second indication of the marking includes an indication defined by two points that are spaced apart approximately by the width of the vehicle in appearance.

5. (previously presented) The apparatus as recited in claim 2, wherein the second indication of the marking includes an end mark that approximately indicates the width of the vehicle in appearance at an apparent predetermined distance behind the rear end of the vehicle on the prospective path and side marks extending from the end mark toward the rear end of the vehicle, wherein the side marks are spaced apart approximately by the apparent width of the vehicle.

6. (previously presented) The apparatus as recited in claim 5, wherein the second indication of the marking further includes two intermediate marks appearing between the end mark and the rear end of the vehicle, each intermediate mark extending between the side marks, wherein the intermediate marks indicate the apparent width of the vehicle.

7. (original) The apparatus as recited in claim 2, wherein the predetermined distance appears to be approximately the same as the wheel base of the vehicle.

8. (previously presented) The apparatus as recited in claim 5, wherein the display control unit calculates the prospective path using polar coordinates and wherein the end

mark of the second indication of the marking is determined by a radial line extending from the polar coordinates.

9. (original) The apparatus as recited in claim 2, wherein, when the prospective path is circular, the display control unit displays the path in an elliptical manner by compressing the prospective path in the longitudinal direction of the vehicle at a predetermined rate.

10. (previously presented) The apparatus as recited in claim 2, wherein the display control unit displaces the indication of the prospective path in the direction of vehicle movement on the monitor.

11. (previously presented) The apparatus as recited in claim 2, wherein the display control unit has an acquisition means for determining the steering speed, and wherein the display control unit calculates the prospective path using the current angle of the steered wheels and a value obtained by multiplying the steering speed by a predetermined coefficient.

12. (previously presented) The apparatus as recited in claim 2, wherein the vehicle has vehicle speed sensor for detecting the speed of the vehicle, and the display control unit has an acquisition means for determining the steering speed, and wherein the display control unit calculates the prospective path using the current angle of the steered wheels and a value obtained by multiplying the ratio of the steering speed and the vehicle speed by a predetermined coefficient.

13. (previously presented) The apparatus as recited in claim 1, wherein the image is displayed in black and white and the guide marking is displayed in color.

14. (currently amended) An apparatus for aiding steering when a vehicle is being driven in reverse while a driver operates a steering wheel, the moving direction of the vehicle being determined in response to the angle of steered wheels, the apparatus comprising:

a camera for capturing an image of an area behind the vehicle;

a monitor for displaying the image captured by the camera; and

a display control unit for displaying a marker that is fixed at a predetermined position with respect to the monitor for aiding the driver in parking, the control unit displaying the marker and the image simultaneously on the monitor, wherein the parallel parking is completed by moving the vehicle in reverse so as to cause the marker to coincide with a corner of a parking space displayed on the monitor, followed by backing while keeping the steered wheels turned at their maximum angle.

15. (previously presented) The apparatus as recited in claim 14, wherein the display control unit displays a fixed reference guide on the monitor, wherein the fixed reference guide includes a pair of fixed side marks that are spaced apart approximately by the apparent width of the vehicle and extends behind the rear end of the vehicle, and a fixed end mark that extends laterally to connect ends of the side marks on the monitor, and wherein the marker is positioned at the center of the fixed end mark.

16. (previously presented) The apparatus as recited in claim 14, wherein the marker includes a first marker used when performing parallel parking to the left and a second marker used when performing parallel parking to the right.

17. (previously presented) The apparatus as recited in claim 16, wherein the first marker and the second marker are selectively displayed depending on whether the vehicle is to be parked to the left or to the right.

18. (original) The apparatus as recited in claim 14, wherein the vehicle has obstruction detectors for detecting an obstruction existing near the front corners of the vehicle, and wherein the display control unit displays the presence of the obstruction on the monitor screen on the basis of a signal output from the obstruction detectors.

19. (currently amended) A method for aiding steering when a vehicle is driven in reverse while a driver operates a steering wheel, comprising:

displaying an image captured by a camera on a monitor provided at a driver's seat, wherein the image is of an area behind the vehicle;

detecting the angle of steered wheels of the vehicle;

superimposing and displaying a guide marking for aiding steering upon the image, wherein the guide marking provides the driver with a first indication, which is a fixed reference guide displaying vehicle width projecting behind the vehicle and continuously showing a path of the vehicle corresponding to the angle of zero degrees of the steered wheels regardless of the current angle of the steered wheels, and a second indication simultaneously displayed with the first indication and showing a prospective path of the vehicle, the prospective path depending on the currently detected angle of the steered wheels; and

causing the vehicle to proceed on a route when the vehicle is driven so that the second indication is positioned at a center of the route, the route being an image of a way behind the vehicle actually displayed on the monitor.

20. (previously presented) The apparatus as recited in claim 1, wherein the display control unit includes a correction means for correcting the prospective path, wherein the display control unit generates the second indications based on the corrected prospective path.

21. (previously presented) The apparatus as recited in claim 20, wherein the correction means corrects the prospective path according to the current steering speed of the steered wheels.